



February 27, 2023 - Appropriations Committee

**H.B. No. 6659 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.**

Senator Hartley, Representative Gibson, and Connecticut General Assembly members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Ali Ghiorse and I am from Greenwich, Connecticut. Today, I am writing on the proposed budget for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, concerning the Department of Agriculture. I respectfully ask for your support in funding the CT Grown for CT Kids Grants Program with an appropriation of 1 million dollars annually.

As a former Chef I had the privilege of cooking for kids using seasonal, locally grown fruits and vegetables. This phase of my career was most rewarding as I saw many kids enjoy their meal when it was prepared with fresh ingredients. Eating seasonal produce at a young age helps to develop a taste and appreciation for fruit and vegetables throughout life, a foundational practice for a healthy body and mind.

CT Grown for CT Kids Grants Program fosters a just food system as it makes fresh food available to all kids, not just those from families who can afford to purchase locally. Farm to institution creates demand for Connecticut grown food, which supports farmers, fosters more jobs and strengthens a circular food economy. I urge you to support funding for this program, as it is a win-win investment in our youth, farms and schools.

Thank you, very much, for your time and service.

Ali Ghiorse, Founder, The Foodshed Network  
Greenwich, CT